

REMARKS

Claims 1-25, 27 and 28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito in view of Haas. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and submit that the combination does not provide a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Applicants submit that the Examiner's characterization of Haas is incorrect. Haas describes a system for inspecting hand held baggage in which the baggage is slipped into a testing region while being held by a person. As shown the handle is held from the outside while being placed in a slot in the testing region. In order to keep x-radiation from the person, x-ray absorbing fibers are placed in the slot. The portion of Haas that is referred to by the Examiner (col. 4, lines 1-14) refers to sag of these fibers and has no relationship to the claimed support sag of the present invention.

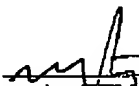
While one could go into a detailed exposition of the differences between the combination of Saito and Haas on the one hand and the independent and dependent claims and the lack of *prima facie* combinability of the references, this seems pointless in view of the clear lack of any relevance of the Haas reference to the present case.

Claims 1, 8 and 26 have been cosmetically amended in a manner that does not narrow their scope, to improve readability and not in response to the rejection or to render them patentable.

Claim 26 has been cosmetically amended by adding "and" at line 6 of the said claim and claim 11 has been cosmetically amended by deleting "any of" at line 1 of the said claim.

As indicated at the interview, applicants expect that a new, non-final office action or a notice of allowance will be issued in due course.

Respectfully submitted,
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